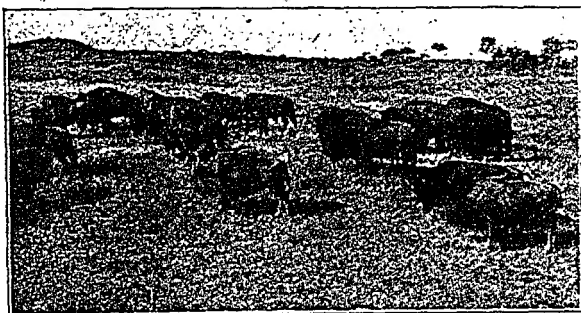


Reorganizing for Advance in Western Canada



BUFFALO AT WAINWRIGHT PARK
ALBERTA

THE BAPTIST UNION OF WESTERN CANADA

207 Empire Building :: Edmonton, Alta.

REORGANIZING FOR ADVANCE IN WESTERN CANADA

By W. C. Smalley



THE YEAR 1938 will be remembered by Western Baptists as a year of reorganization. With the meeting of the Baptist Union of Western Canada at Vancouver, in July, the new order will be completely established, as far as the prairie provinces are concerned, with the newly formed Associations functioning as planned.

The change in organization has not been conceived and put into operation overnight. As long ago as 1925 many of the then leaders felt that there should be some change in our denominational structure. This feeling was expressed in the appointment of committees to examine the organization. Reports were presented at the Union meetings of 1926 and 1929. Though the conviction that the territory should be divided into areas irrespective of provincial boundaries found large support, nothing was done to bring this about until 1935, when an inter-provincial committee was appointed to again examine the Union organization. This Committee went carefully, slowly, and patiently to the task of planning some form of organization, which, while not destroying the autonomy of any local church, would unify denominational policies and programs, and enable the Baptists of Western Canada, from the eastern border of Manitoba to Vancouver Island, to speak with one voice, on questions of major importance, and move with one purpose in extending the Kingdom in our great territory.

At Calgary in 1936 the committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. W. G. Carpenter presented its first report and suggested a plan of reorganization. This plan after careful consideration and full discussion was adopted in principle, and the committee was instructed to prepare a constitution and by-laws, embodying these accepted principles for presentation to the next meeting of the Union. This was done, and the constitution and by-laws were presented for consideration at the 1937 meeting of the Baptist Union, in Regina, by the Rev. Elbert Paul, of Vancouver. After thorough discussion, and with some amendments, the constitution and by-laws were adopted, and the committee instructed to proceed to the reorganization of the territory along the lines decided upon, dividing it into Associational areas.

For definite and pertinent reasons it was decided to leave reorganization in British Columbia for the present. The Convention of British Columbia is however an integral part of the Union co-operating in all Union activities and participating in the direction and the support of the Union officers.

Apart from this exception the reorganization was undertaken at once. The committee met in October 1937, and drew up a proposed constitution for Associations, and divided the three prairie provinces into six districts. This plan was adopted by the Board of the Baptist Union at its annual meeting in November, and put into effect in the spring of 1938.

The Associations

The six Associations are:

The Red River Valley Association comprising the churches of Winnipeg and Eastern Manitoba.

The Brandon-Swan River Association comprising the churches of Western Manitoba.

The Associations of Northern and Southern Saskatchewan comprising the churches of the described areas.

The Calgary-Lethbridge Association and the Edmonton-Peace Association.

There is a touch of romance in the name Red River Valley Association. This was the name of the first Baptist inter-church organization in Western Canada. The first Association so named was organized about 1880.

Another link with history is found in the fact that when the Baptist Union of Western Canada was organized in Moose Jaw in 1907 it was decided to hold its next meeting in Vancouver in 1908, and now thirty years after, we are to meet again in Vancouver, this time also to give our denominational blessing to a new organization; an organization which we hope will, while retaining all the values and eliminating the weaknesses of the old order, make for the strength, the unity and the effectiveness of our denomination in this vast territory. Though not of necessity confined to provincial boundaries the associational division roughly divides each province into two areas.

The Conferences

In addition to the Associations already mentioned there are four Non-English Conferences in the Union; the Swedish Baptist Conference of Alberta; the Central Swedish Baptist Conference; the Russo-Ukrainian Baptist Conference; and the Hungarian Baptist Conference. These conferences will function as formerly but their churches will be invited and encouraged to send representatives to the Associational meetings in the areas in which they are located, and will have the right to send delegates to the Union.

Executive and Field Officers

The plan of reorganization included the appointment of a General Secretary, a Superintendent of Home Missions and Evangelism, and a Director of Church School and Young People's Work. These positions were filled at the annual meeting of the Union Board in November, 1937, when the following appointments were made:

General Secretary: Rev. W. C. Smalley.

Superintendent of Home Missions and Evangelism: Rev. J. A. MacRae, of Cleveland.

Director of Church School and Young People's Work: The Rev. T. B. McDormand of Amherst, Nova Scotia.

Mr. MacRae commenced his duties on January 1st last, and has already given evidence that the choice is a wise one. Mr. McDormand will not be available until November next, although he will spend the month of July visiting various parts of the West.

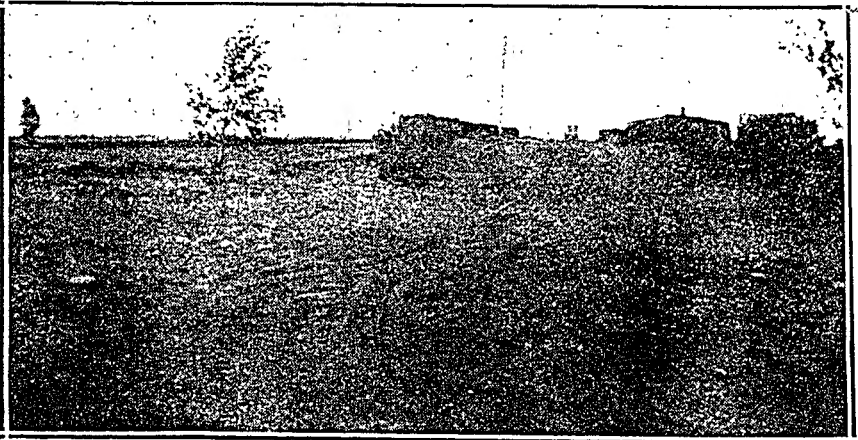
One other addition to the Baptist forces in Western Canada has been made by the appointment of the Rev. D. M. Anderson of Mount Vernon, Washington, to the position of Swedish General Missionary. Mr. Anderson who fills a vacancy made some seven years ago when the Rev. J. Paul Erickson returned to the United States, comes to us highly recommended by his brethren in the General Swedish Baptist Conferences of North America.

So much for reorganization, now what of the field?

The Ravages of Drought

Perhaps the full weight of the stock crash was felt in 1930, but for many parts of Western Canada this was followed by a steady succession of complete crop failures. So persistent has the drought been through the years that vast areas of one-time fertile land, bearing rich harvests, have become desert wastes. Let me quote from an article I wrote last August immediately after a trip through Southern Saskatchewan:

"In the southern part of the Province I travelled from Regina to Moose Jaw on the main highway, and then turned south sixty miles to Congress. Though I travelled 325 miles in this district, I did not see a single field of grain. I spent a Sunday with the Baptist Church at Congress and talked with the people. Until a month ago they had been entirely without rain. A month ago there was a very heavy shower, and on the afternoon of the day I was there, there was another. The minister told me that he had attended two funerals recently, and in digging the graves they found that there was no moisture in the ground, even at a depth of seven feet. Though rain fell heavily while I was there, it just seemed to disappear in the fields, and within a very short time after the storm was over, the dust was blowing again. They tell weird stories of the effects of the drought in the country. One woman tells of milking seven cows and getting half a pail of milk from the lot. That is the condition of the stock through lack of feed. One German Baptist, a farmer on a large scale, told me that he had 400 acres of ground prepared, which he did not seed at all. There had been a fair amount of snow in some districts, and there was promise of a good crop early in the spring, but from the middle of May until the middle of July there was not a drop of rain, just the burning sun, day after day, so that what little grain germinated, and only about 25% of the grain sown came up, was shrivelled and burned. They tell me that before the rain of a month ago, there was absolutely no vegetation, and the whole country was a dark gray color.

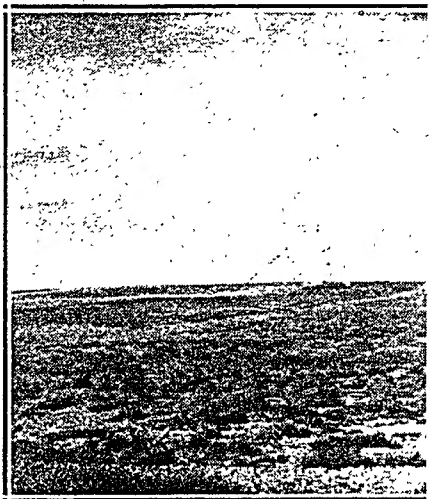


No vegetation—just dust, dust everywhere—Congress District, Saskatchewan, July, 1937

After the rain, the Russian thistle sprang up and is now about four to six inches high. It looks like a green field, but it is not. This thistle can be used for fodder, if it is cut while young, but it is absolutely useless for wintering stock.

The country has already faced many hard years, but this promises to be the worst ever. There is little provision for the coming winter, less than there has been for any winter during the eight years of depression. Another thing I noticed was that houses and church buildings are almost entirely without paint. This makes them look dreary and the sight is depressing in the extreme. How these people can worship in such buildings week after week is hard to imagine, but when I spoke about the advisability of painting, I was told that it would be useless at the present time. The dust has lashed the paint off the buildings."

The suffering of the people mentally as well as physically cannot be described. Whole families with all their meagre effects have moved hither and thither by the hundred, being forced after many years of toil to leave the homes they had established and travel hundreds of miles seeking new locations where they could start life all over again. Start again, yes, but not so hopeful, not so young, not so buoyant, not so strong, as formerly. Others have stayed on, and are staying on, hoping against hope, while watching the work of years, their farms,



This field sown to wheat. Photo taken July, 1937. No wheat, just "Russian" Thistle.

their herds, their homes — slowly and steadily depreciate to nothingness until now they have less than nothing. Poorly clothed and oft-times hungry, these people have suffered. But the physical suffering is not to be compared with the mental anguish through which many of them have passed. Men and women, among the finest of our Canadian citizenship; hard working, thrifty, intelligent, self-reliant; justly proud of their proved ability to accomplish things, held helpless, and despite their best efforts forced to accept relief which, though they are grateful, they would gladly have forgone had they been able. The spirit of these people may best be described by the following incidents.

In 1935-36 the people of Southwestern Manitoba were forced by drought conditions to accept relief. In 1937 they had a crop, and although they had not recovered from the effects of the drought period, they were the first to respond to the appeal for those in areas where the drought persisted.

Let me here quote the cover page of The Western Baptist of October 1936.

Thanksgiving Without a Harvest

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls.

Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hind's feet, and he will make me to walk upon high places."

With this sublime passage the prophet Habakkuk closes his prophecy. All around him he pictures dreary desolation, wasted orchards, fruitless trees, drought-stricken fields, deserted cattle stalls and yet his spirit is undismayed. His soul rises above the thralldom of things. He does not live by them alone and he refuses to accept defeat because they are not. He praises, not for what God gives, but for what God is; not for the material blessing he might receive, but for the spiritual fellowship he

actually enjoys. He can give thanks at harvest time even though there be no harvest.

How aptly the prophet's description depicts large areas of our land today. Thousands will face the harvest thanksgiving season without a harvest. They will be called upon to endure the prophet's tribulation; can they match the prophet's faith?—SOME CAN.

Here is a letter we received the other day. It was not sent for publication and we print it without permission:

Sept. 15th, 1936.

Dear Mr. Smalley,

I am sending you six dollars. One dollar for my subscription to the Western Baptist which expires in November. The five dollars is a little bit towards our budget. We are again without a harvest, making six years in succession. And it is very hard for every one. We have only our seed wheat, none to sell. No grain for our horses. But still we have blessings untold.

Yours sincerely,

Such spirit cannot be broken by earthly disaster for like the prophet's it is beyond the reach of earth.

Appreciated Relief

The drought has not been an unmixed curse. The sufferings of one group has called forth the helpfulness of others. Last winter as in previous winters through the period, those resident in more favored parts of Canada and in more favorable circumstances, have responded spontaneously and generously to appeals for help. People of both east and west have shipped fruit, vegetables, clothing by the carload to the stricken areas. The generosity and helpfulness of our Baptist friends has not been outdone by that of any other people. To all who have shared in this gracious act of Christian love to whom this pamphlet may come, whether east or west, we express our grateful thanks. Your gifts were better than you knew.

Drought and the Mission Budget

Notwithstanding the splendid spirit of sacrifice already referred to, it goes without saying that the continued drought has tragically reduced the ability of Western Baptists to support the Mission budget.

In 1930 Baptists of the West contributed \$69,923.71 for all missionary purposes; while in 1937, the figure has fallen to \$49,114.62.

This is no evidence of waning interest, for anyone who knows the real situation in which many of our churches find themselves asks not "Why did they give so little?" but "How do they give so much?"

Through the drought years there have been achievements that it might be well to record.

Some Material Achievements

The present General Secretary came to that office in July 1929. What with the stock crash in October of that year, with its consequent depression, and the continued drought since, the succeeding years have been hazardous and difficult. Notwithstanding this, look at the material achievements of those nearly nine years.

IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: The First Baptist Church, Vancouver,



Sunday School at Westminster Heights,
New Westminster, B.C.

was entirely destroyed by fire in 1931, but almost before the ashes of the old building were cold work was commenced on a new and more commodious building. It is in this church the Baptist Union will meet in July, 1938.

New buildings have also been erected in Vancouver Heights and West Point Grey, Vancouver; New Westminster church, effectively led by Rev. J. L. Sloat, completes this summer its comprehensive building program.

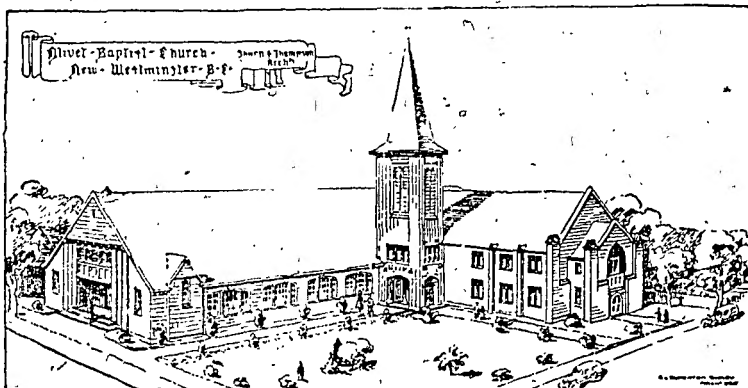
"Climaxing 52 years of progress, the fine new Olivet Baptist Church, the fourth used by Olivet congregations in the Royal City, is now under construction at Queen's avenue and Seventh street, at a cost of more than \$14,000.

Ceremony of laying the cornerstone has been set for July 11th. Rev. J. L. Sloat, pastor, has received the acceptance of Dr. George W. Truett, Dallas, president of the Baptist World's Alliance, of an invitation to deliver the dedicatory address. The ceremony will coincide with the meeting of the Baptist Union of Western Canada in Vancouver on that date.

The new church replaces the 39-year-old church and Sunday School buildings which have just been removed by the wreckers.

The architect's plans and sketches show that the new Olivet church will be one of the largest and most attractive in Western Canada, with 15 halls and rooms for various services and activities. The main auditorium and gallery will seat over 400, and the school room chapel will seat 200. There are also two large classrooms and a ladies' parlor to seat 50 persons each, as well as several other classrooms and vestries.

The new church building, shaped in the form of an "L" with a tower in the angle, is of sturdy frame construction on concrete



foundations. The exterior is to be finished in wide cedar shakes, with the tower completed in vertical lines of heavy timber. The large semi-gothic arched windows surrounding the two wings will give plenty of light. It is planned to use stained glass in the upper parts of all the side windows and the full end windows.

The ladies' parlor, choir rooms, minister's study and robing rooms for baptisms will be at the rear of the chancel. Over these and at the rear of the organ chamber will be another Sunday School or young people's unit.

The main entrance will be off Seventh street. The tower entrance will allow one to pass immediately into the church, to the school room or to the parlors. At one end of the foyer will be a wide main stairway leading into the gallery, while at the other end will be a rest-room and a side entrance to the floor level of the church."

In addition to these city churches the following buildings have been erected or acquired in new fields in British Columbia: Westminster Heights, Barrowton, Riverway, Upper Sumas. That is eight new buildings in British Columbia.

IN ALBERTA: The Lethbridge Baptist Church under the aggressive leadership of Rev. T. Frears, outgrew their church building and acquired in 1935 a fine church property. This was remodeled and re-decorated and is now occupied free of debt. In addition to this achievement new buildings have been erected in Alberta at Grande Prairie, Mallaig (Swedish), Killam (Swedish), Valhalla (Norwegian), Beaver Lodge, Tomahawk (Ukrainian), Cherry Grove.

Valhalla

On Sunday, August 1st, the new Norwegian Baptist Church building was dedicated here. The day was beautiful and rich in blessing from God. About 300 people attended the dedication service in the afternoon of that day. There were at least 200 people at the evening service.

Rev. O. Breiding, general missionary of the Norwegian Baptist Conference, was asked to preach the dedicatory service.

The Grande Prairie Baptist church was represented by its pastor and a few other members. Rev. J. M. Baxter preached at the evening service. Many greetings were brought, from Baptist Union of Western Canada; the Norwegian Baptist Conference of America; from several Baptist churches and individuals, and from one other denomination. A free lunch was served to all present between the services on Sunday.

The people gave a good offering to the cause that Sunday. It was surely a day of rejoicing. The church wants again to express its sincere thanks to the Baptist Union of Western Canada for the financial help towards the church building. The new church building is 26 by 36 feet. The building is not completed yet.

Beaver Lodge

Sunday, October 31st, was a happy day for the Christian friends in the Beaver Lodge district, they had the joy of dedicating a new Baptist church. This church sprang up almost like Jonah's Gourd, overnight, but we pray and hope that it will stand for many years and be a great blessing in the community. Just three weeks before the dedication, Mr. Hugh Campbell, Rev. J. M. Baxter of Grande Prairie, together with a few others, knelt on the ground with their spades in their hands ready to start the work; even though as yet there was not one foot of lumber on the ground, they started out in faith and trust in Him Who is able to do far more abundantly than we can ask or think. In the afternoon the same day the lumber was delivered and the work started. Willing hands came from far and near and in three weeks the church was so near completed that it could be dedicated. The time for the dedication service was set for 2:30 p.m. but 10 o'clock in the forenoon the people started to come and by the time the service began there were twice as many people as the church could contain. Nearly all churches within a 30-mile radius postponed their services and come to take part in the feast (the dedication). About 12 pastors and workers



Dedication of Norwegian Church at Valhalla, Alberta, August 1st, 1937

"OUR WESTERN FIELD"

NEW WESTMINSTER
OLIVET CHURCH
New Building to be dedicated by DR. FAUETT JULY 11, 1938

VALHALLA
NORWEGIAN Church built and dedicated AUGUST, 1937

BEAVER LODGE
Church Built - and Dedicated OCTOBER 1937

ROCKFORT BRIDGE
UKRAINIAN Church Organized, Building in course of erection

FRANCHERE
UKRAINIAN Land Secured, Building in course of erection

TURTLE GROVE
Church Organized JULY, 1937

BRANCEPETH
NORWEGIAN Building erected 1936

PONTRILAS
Church Organized 1932, Land Secured, Building Under way

FLIN FLON
Land Secured, Church organized and building under consideration

PRINCE ALBERT
Second Building erected 1937

EDMONTON PEACE RIVER ASSOCIATION
Valhalla, Beaver Lodge, Grande Prairie, Rockfort Bridge, Tomahawk, Edmonton, Thorsby, Brightview, Wetaskiwin, Ponoka, Killam, Lacombe, Red Deer, Stettler, Fairfields, Provost, Wilkie, Biggar, Asquith, Avondale, Lloydminster, Norbury, Leask, Prince Albert, Brancepeth, Wakarusa, Pontrilas, Quill Lake, Wadena, Strasbourg, Regina, Dauphin, Tuxton, Stonewall, Winnipeg, Emerson, Mariton, Boissevain, Elgin, Brandon, Kesteven, Sloughton, Viceroy, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, High River, Olds, Calgary, Nanton, Hilda, Reid Hill, Cranbrook, Robson, Fernie, Trail, Nelson, Vernon, Kelowna, W. Summerland, Penticton, Chilliwack, New Westminster, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Victoria

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION
Turtle Grove, Mallaig, Franchere, Prince Albert, Brancepeth, Wakarusa, Pontrilas, Quill Lake, Wadena, Strasbourg, Regina, Dauphin, Tuxton, Stonewall, Winnipeg, Emerson, Mariton, Boissevain, Elgin, Brandon, Kesteven, Sloughton, Viceroy, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, High River, Olds, Calgary, Nanton, Hilda, Reid Hill, Cranbrook, Robson, Fernie, Trail, Nelson, Vernon, Kelowna, W. Summerland, Penticton, Chilliwack, New Westminster, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Victoria

SOUTHERN SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION
Turtle Grove, Mallaig, Franchere, Prince Albert, Brancepeth, Wakarusa, Pontrilas, Quill Lake, Wadena, Strasbourg, Regina, Dauphin, Tuxton, Stonewall, Winnipeg, Emerson, Mariton, Boissevain, Elgin, Brandon, Kesteven, Sloughton, Viceroy, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, High River, Olds, Calgary, Nanton, Hilda, Reid Hill, Cranbrook, Robson, Fernie, Trail, Nelson, Vernon, Kelowna, W. Summerland, Penticton, Chilliwack, New Westminster, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Victoria

BRANDON SWAN RIVER ASSOCIATION
Turtle Grove, Mallaig, Franchere, Prince Albert, Brancepeth, Wakarusa, Pontrilas, Quill Lake, Wadena, Strasbourg, Regina, Dauphin, Tuxton, Stonewall, Winnipeg, Emerson, Mariton, Boissevain, Elgin, Brandon, Kesteven, Sloughton, Viceroy, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, High River, Olds, Calgary, Nanton, Hilda, Reid Hill, Cranbrook, Robson, Fernie, Trail, Nelson, Vernon, Kelowna, W. Summerland, Penticton, Chilliwack, New Westminster, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Victoria

RED RIVER VALLEY ASSOCIATION
Turtle Grove, Mallaig, Franchere, Prince Albert, Brancepeth, Wakarusa, Pontrilas, Quill Lake, Wadena, Strasbourg, Regina, Dauphin, Tuxton, Stonewall, Winnipeg, Emerson, Mariton, Boissevain, Elgin, Brandon, Kesteven, Sloughton, Viceroy, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, High River, Olds, Calgary, Nanton, Hilda, Reid Hill, Cranbrook, Robson, Fernie, Trail, Nelson, Vernon, Kelowna, W. Summerland, Penticton, Chilliwack, New Westminster, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Victoria

There is a Baptist Church in every town on the map, except Churchill; those underlined are non-English.
From Winnipeg to Vancouver by rail it is 1482 miles.
From Emerson to Flin Flon it is 450 miles, and from Vancouver to Prince Rupert it is 475 miles "as the crow flies".

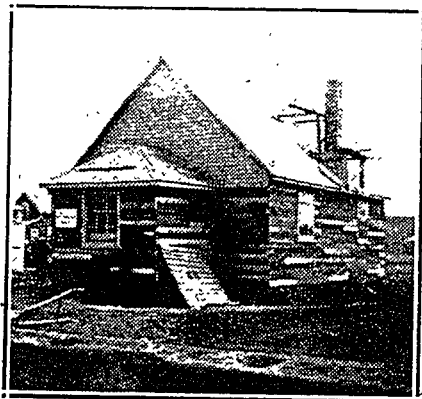
from various churches and denominations were present. A beautiful spirit of co-operation was felt and is felt among the different denominations. Brother and Sister Campbell are doing a heroic work and many are the souls that have been won to the Lord through their testimony.

The new church is a frame building 24 by 40 feet, with 10 feet taken off in the rear for living quarters. The work was all donated but the material will cost about \$500.00, of which about \$300.00 is either raised or promised.

IN SASKATCHEWAN: The building program includes new buildings at Nipawin, Emmanuel, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Bagley (Swedish), Brancepeth (Norwegian), Norbury (Hungarian), Petrosyk (Ukrainian). The Prince Albert dedication is described in The Western Baptist as follows:

"Dedication of the West End Baptist Sunday School Hall, October 17th, 1937. It rained and rained all Saturday night

and all day Sunday, the day of dedication. The rain was a good omen. It brought hope and good cheer to all, and walking to church in the rain was a pleasant experience.



New Sunday School Building in course of erection at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

"The church was filled for the morning service and the congregation listened with rapt attention to a vital message brought by Rev. Arch. Ward, Superintendent of Home Missions. The rain was still falling as the congregation left the church that morning. However those who had cars, saw to it

that those who had none were given an opportunity to attend the dedication services of the West End Hall.

"By three o'clock the Hall was filled to the limit. Those who could not get seats stood throughout the entire service. Joy and expectation was written on the face of the congregation. Rev. William Bonney conducted the impressive service, while Rev. Arch. Ward gave a stirring message on the value of a church in the community.

"There was no doubt in the minds of those present but that the new hall is destined to become a ~~central~~ centre for Christian work in the west end of Prince Albert.

"The story of the work goes back six years. At that time, the Board of Deacons saw the need for Sunday School work to be done in the district. Also about that time Rev. Arch. Ward visited the locality and was impressed with the need of a Chris-

tian ministry to be rendered there. But times were hard, at least we thought so, little did we know how difficult conditions were to become. We decided to wait. A year ago Mr. G. Healy opened his home to the children of the district for Sunday School purposes. His room was not big enough, so he rented a small house. However, his work called him away from the city and before leaving he arranged with Deacon Joseph Oliver to carry on the work. Mr. Oliver was ably assisted by Deacon James Horton in this Sunday School Mission.

"This spring the need for a suitable place in order to carry on the work was evident. Encouraged by a small grant from the Provincial Board, the church undertook the building of the hall. The labor was given free, and while there is still much to be done to the building before it can be used in the severe winter weather, it has already proved itself to be meeting a vital need. It will serve as a centre for our Ukrainian and Hungarian work under the leadership of Rev. Peter Kindrat and Rev. John Monus. We thank God for the open door set before us, and by His grace we propose to accept the challenge of the open door."

While in Manitoba the list includes Minitonas (Czecho-Slovak), Mintonas (Ukrainian), Winnipeg Pilgrim (Colored), Winnipeg Bethlehem (Czecho-Slovak), Overstone (Ukrainian).

A total of twenty-eight new buildings secured during the period that our people have been harassed by drought. Nor is this advance in any one spot, as the number is made up of eight in British Columbia, eight in Alberta, seven in Saskatchewan, and five in Manitoba.

This does not complete the building program, for lots have been secured at Rochfort Bridge and Franchere, where Ukrainian buildings will be erected this summer.



Pastor Diduk and Baptismal Candidates
at Franchere, Alberta

Lumber is also on the ground at Winfield, for the erection of a Swedish Church. These three places are in Alberta. At Pontrilas in Saskatchewan the little group organized as a church last year are seriously addressing themselves to the matter of church building. In Manitoba the door to the further north has swung widely open. The Rev. D. Ritchie of Dauphin and the Rev. C. J. Smith of Swan River have visited on several occasions the towns of The Pas, Sheridan, Cranberry Portage and

Flin Flon. In the first and last mentioned of these towns there are Baptist people and an open door. Recently Mr. Smith wrote:

"I spent four and a half days in Flin Flon visiting our Baptist members and adherents, who are longing to see a Baptist church organized and a building erected. Our numbers are increasing from month to month, with a church building, and an

aggressive evangelistic leader this work would soon loom large in the town life, and many trophies won for Christ there. A simple cottage prayer meeting attracted twenty worshippers. The town has a population of about 8,000 and is growing rapidly. Such is the open door. A church site has been secured and the challenge to us is to commence building in the spring. Other mining areas are being opened and developed within a few miles from Flin Flon and Cranberry Portage while to the far north, 240 miles north of Churchill at Rankin Inlet, two million dollars are to be spent immediately, in a rich mining district, where there is the prospect of a larger centre than Flin Flon. Two million dollars prospecting for ore. How much will be spent for souls?"

So does the Northern door open.

Spiritual Progress

So much for material achievements, but what of spiritual progress? During the nine years already referred to (9 years) 7,054 have been added to our churches by baptism. This number is made up as follows:

Manitoba, 1,089; Saskatchewan, 911; Alberta, 1,856; British Columbia, 1,086. German, 1,076 (five years only). Other Non-English groups, 1,036.



"Northern Lights" Baptist Young People of Northern Manitoba

Seventeen churches have been organized during the same period. Signs of advance are on the increase. Here are some of them. During the past year or so Baptist Churches have been organized at Pontrilas, Little Woody, Henribourg, Turtle Grove, Poplar Valley (Win-

field), and new work opened up in many outlying places in each one of the provinces. The following stories speak for themselves.

Turtle Grove

(The Rev. Arch. Ward tells the story.) In a quiet farm home in the park lands of northwest Saskatchewan, near Turtleford, a little company of men and women met in November, 1936, for the purpose of discussing the organization of a Baptist Church in the district. The families represented lived many miles apart and it would be a problem for all of them to meet for fellowship regularly. But they were impressed with the need for such a ministry as their faith might render to the community. It was one o'clock in the morning before the little meeting broke up but there was a deepened conviction of the need and a hope that it might be realized. Special meetings were held in the Fall at which a number professed conversion and during the Winter meetings were carried on in two school houses by two of these brethren and the meetings were largely attended.

On Saturday evening, May 22nd, another meeting was held and continued into the hours of the morning as the men could not

meet until late in the evening. At this meeting it was decided to organize a Baptist Church in the school house next day.

The Turtle Grove school house was filled at the service in the following afternoon and after a statement had been made of what had taken place during the winter those who were interested were asked to remain and a new Baptist Church was organized in the district 65 miles northwest of North Battleford. There were 15³ Charter Members, and Mr. Stanley Lake, who had carried on the meetings during the winter, was appointed as lay pastor of the congregation. Miss Ruth Weber of Mervin was elected Secretary-Treasurer. The prospects for this new cause are very bright and hopeful for in that little group of 15 there are some devoted and mature Christians who hold deep convictions concerning the Baptist mission and message, and who have proved their devotion and loyalty to the evangelical ideal by the service they have rendered in their own communities.

The first baptismal and communion service of this little church was held on Wednesday, July 21st. Island Lake is a beautiful body of water six miles north of Turtleford. It is a beautiful spot, quiet and peaceful, surrounded by trees. It was an impressive scene on that Wednesday afternoon. Quite a goodly company had gathered to hear the message and see the baptism in the lake. They sat and listened on the sandy shore to an exposition of the meaning and significance and value of "Believer's Baptism." Many had never heard of it before and most of them had never seen a baptism. It was a solemn revelation to many of them as their words and conversation afterwards indicated. Some strange and fantastic notions about the whole matter of baptism were dissipated that day. The sky was overcast and rain was threatening and though the rain might make the roads a bit dangerous none thought of going until the full service was completed. If the trees could speak they would tell the story to coming generations of that strange and beautiful scene of the first baptism in the waters of the lake and Christian men and women confessing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and of that company sitting there silent on the shore and seeing the dramatic witness of great things that had transpired in the souls of these believers.

Another preaching service had been planned for the evening and the people had brought their picnic baskets with them but the threatening nature of the weather made it seem advisable to cancel the evening service. The members of the little church, however, felt they would like to have the fellowship and communion of the Lord's Supper and so we met in the bare room of a disused shack by the sandy shore of the lake. After the baptismal service a woman who had been baptized three years before asked us to join the fellowship. Along with the Deacons the writer had the privilege of examining her and presented her to the church who accepted her into their membership. One plank bench was the only seating accommodation, on which the women sat, and the men stood throughout the service. The bread was provided from the picnic sandwiches of the people and the juice of Saskatoon berries provided the wine. These emblems were held in the hands of the Deacons throughout the service as there was no table on which to lay them. The Hand

of Fellowship was extended to those who had just been baptized one-half hour before and to the woman who had been received on experience. It was the first baptism and the first communion of the little church and it was the first Communion of the Lord's Supper which some of that little flock had ever seen or participated in. There was a quiet and solemn service in that little bare room as the ordinance proceeded and hearts were throbbing and hearts were glad in the fellowship of a common faith and all were conscious that not only were the symbols of sacrifice there but that the real Presence of our Divine Redeemer was in our midst. Without organ or instrument but with voices vibrant with gladness the little company stood and raised their voices in praise to God as they sang together, "Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," and without words, quietly, we all filed out of the shack into the open. So ended the first baptism and the first communion service of the little church at Turtle Grove. It was a memorable service, a unique experience and communion, which can never be quite forgotten by those who were present.

Henribourg

(The Rev. Peter Kindrat writes in The Western Baptist, March, 1938.) The work was started about three years ago among the newcomers from Poland. They were found in two communities without any religious services. One family in particular built a large house, too large for their own needs. On Sundays and holidays most of the people would gather at this house, and play cards, and dance. They would also drink, both children and adults drank this home-made booze. Later on we started to preach the Gospel in this very same house. Great crowds gathered there from time to time. A year later, two of the oldest sons of this family accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour, also a woman of another family. We had a very rejoicing occasion of leading the three of them through the waters of baptism and resurrection unto new life. They became a living light in these two communities. These people who came out for Christ were persecuted by their former friends. The man whose wife had been baptized lost a few head of cattle one night. Someone entered the barn at night and turned the stock loose and by morning some of the cattle had been killed by the others. It was a severe test to these settlers. On more than one occasion, one of these people would be met on the road and would be called horrible names and cursed, or they would be coaxed to take a drink, but not once did they yield, but stood firm in the Lord's truth, and by the Grace of God. Finally the house which was the den of evil, became the house of God. The said family gave us an unfinished room about twenty by sixteen. We bought the windows and door, plastered and whitewashed the room. Finally we had a chapel where our people could worship Him. We decorated the walls with scripture texts and Sunday School pictures. At present there are eight members and an organized Sunday School which is conducted by the local people. Large crowds attend the Sunday School concerts held occasionally.

From the May issue Western Baptist Rev. Peter Kindrat writing:
Organization took place on Saturday afternoon, March 19th,

in the temporary chapel four miles north of the town. Look for the description of the chapel and its origin in The Western Baptist, in March issue, page 5.

The believers that are scattered in the district northeast of Prince Albert, in the area about 30 miles, were gathered for that special occasion. The meetings began on Friday evening with much fervent prayers. Saturday all day Bible Conference, where much of the Scripture was explained and much instruction, knowledge and inspiration received by those that were present. Some expressed their impression, that it was for them, as being on the Mount of Transfiguration for two days, for it was good to be there and feel the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Saturday afternoon toward the close of the session, the church was organized with 15 members. The Blaine Lake Church was represented by one of its deacons, Mr. P. Onishenko. Rev. Kindrat being the chairman and Mr. S. Lawreniuk as secretary of that meeting.

On account of roads being in bad shape no representatives could be present from Prince Albert Baptist Church, but as soon as the weather permits, we plan to hold an open air baptism and formal recognition is planned at that time, to which other churches will be invited. Several conversions were experienced during these meetings and some have asked for baptism, which will take place some time next June.

Saturday evening and twice on Sunday the said chapel was filled to a possible capacity, the hallway was filled and even a few had to stand on the porch, for it was warm spring-like weather and the doors were open so they could hear what was going on inside.

Sunday afternoon the Sunday School gave a short program of songs, recitations and memorizing of Scriptures; Sunday morning Lord's Supper was observed; late Sunday afternoon these meetings came to a close where many took part in testimonies and expressing their experience of the said gatherings. So they went to their respective homes and tasks that are awaiting them, two of the brethren walked over 28 miles one way to be present at these gatherings and they went back home walking. On the way most of them would be humming the new hymns they had learned at the meetings, for they love hymn singing, and sometimes they lose the hymn on the way (that is the music of the hymn) but usually it comes back to them when they retire at night, and when it comes back, it would be a real eureka to them. I have found it, I have found it!

After four years of hardship, discouragement, pain and sorrows, on the part of missionary and of those whom the Lord had been giving him from time to time, comes his joy as reward, for his faithful labor. For the Scripture says: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

There is no greater joy than to see souls being saved, and to see them rejoicing in the new life, and to share with them of

that joy and experience of being in the Lord. O! for the simple faith that receives the gift of God's love, and peace that passeth all understanding.

Scandinavian Mission Opened in Vancouver

The Rev. Ole Larson, Superintendent of Mission Work in Washington under the Columbia Swedish Conference, visited Vancouver in the spring of 1937 to make a personal survey with a view to starting work among the 20,000 Scandinavians resident in greater Vancouver. As a result of evangelistic work among them at that time he challenged the Columbia Conference to undertake work in a needy field. He also appeared before the B.C. Convention to plead for co-operation and support.

On December 28th last, a mission was opened in a centrally located hall. The Rev. Charles and Mrs. Sundstrom, Portland, were chosen as missionaries. At the opening Swedish service the missionaries were assisted by Rev. Ole Larson, H. A. Johnson, Gordon Larson and A. E. Anderson of the Swedish Conference. Two nights later a similar service in English was held when Rev. Nelson A. Harkness, President of the B.C. Convention; Mr. Robert Robertson, Chairman of the Board; Rev. A. W. Ward, Jackson Avenue Mission, and Rev. Henry Knox, Acting Supt. of Home Missions, took part.

Swedish services are held each night except Friday which is conducted in English and at which young people from the Vancouver churches give acceptable assistance. The Rev. J. A. MacRae when in the city recently preached with great acceptance. At a recent Saturday evening meeting 200 men were present to join in singing Gospel hymns and to listen to a Gospel message.

Mr. and Mrs. Sundstrom have already received much encouragement in their work and are happy in the conviction that a great door and effectual has been opened to them. As the missionaries are gifted musicians and singers their ministry is appealing. Once a week they conduct a radio service. Prayer is asked on behalf of this new work in British Columbia.

Ukrainian Work

The Rev. J. E. Prihodko reports that during the past quarter sixty-nine preaching services and eleven Sunday School sessions have been held, one hundred and thirty-six pastoral calls made and 3,177 miles travelled.

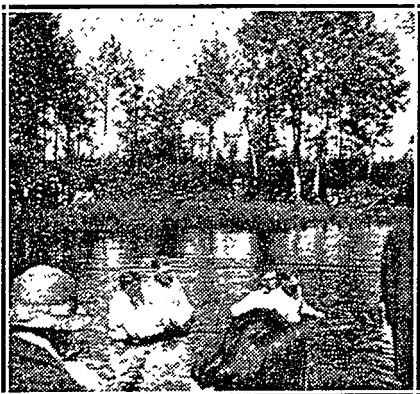
At Erwood on June 13th four converts were baptized and added to the Erwood group. This district is new and thinly populated by homesteaders who make their homes in the thick bush of spruce, pine and poplar. Erwood, a village of about half a dozen buildings, was in festive mood for the occasion. The village hall was thronged. Messages were delivered by Rev. P. Kindrat and Rev. J. E. Prihodko. After the morning service the Red Deer River was the Jordan in whose waters the four believers were buried in baptism, according to the word of God.

Some Recent Encouragement

For the past months evangelism has been particularly stressed in Western Canada. This has been seen in the activities of many of our

pastors; in the coming of Mr. MacRae; and in the clarion call issued by Dr. C. C. McLaurin. Many of our churches set apart a special day when the church was open every hour for special prayer. Some of the churches found this so helpful that they repeated it. Special campaigns have been undertaken. It is too early to tabulate the results of this activity, but here are a few of the reports showing gratifying results.

First Baptist Church, Calgary, report over one hundred additions to the membership since January, fifty-one of these by baptism.



German Pastors Baptising in Alberta

First Church, Edmonton, have received twenty-six by baptism in recent weeks.

Strathcona Church, Edmonton, have received fourteen by baptism.

The German Church, Edmonton, had a great day on Easter Sunday, forty-one converts being baptized.

Grand View Church, Vancouver, report twenty baptisms on Easter Sunday.

German Church, Morris (Manitoba), report twenty baptisms.

First Church, Regina, report fifteen and Cameron Memorial nine.

Reports are coming to us from all over our field giving evidence of an abundance of rain.

Surely the fields are white unto harvest.

German Baptists on Hobbema Indian Reserve

Many are the happy recollections that have been experienced by the tireless workers of the Lord among the Red men of the Plains. Visits in their homes are very highly appreciated. Although it often takes time before they give expression to their gratitude, yet they consider it an honor and a blessing when the missionary comes to see them. After a visit to the home of Chief Erminskin, where his daughter, Chief John Bear's wife of the Bobtail Reserve, was ill, the missionary had prayer with them and spoke words of comfort on the sick woman and her friends. Some time after the missionary was told by Mrs. John Bear: The priest does not pray with us, and we thank you, Mr. Benke, that you think so much of us to come to our humble home, and pray with us. Recently on a visit to the home of Sammy Bull, where the conversation turned to the topic of the Christian life, Sammy expressed himself in his quaint way: "Some Indians go to Round Church, some to Catholic Church, but I and many people here go to Protestant Church. Difference is, if I want to be a Christian, I must let worldly things go."

Last summer we had a large gathering on the Bull Reserve, where several hundred white people and Indians met for a Gospel service. The Millet German Baptist Brass Band played sweet melodies, the Wetaskiwin children's choir sang several songs and an Indian boy bravely and impressively sang a solo. Johnny Rabbit interpreted the Gospel message of the missionaries.

During the Easter week a special service was held in their old church. (As seen on the photo.) Rev. Fred W. Benke and his young people from the Wetaskiwin Church held this meeting. Pictures of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ were shown and the story of the Saviour's undying love for all people was proclaimed in word, song and picture. A deep impression was made on the congregation of about 40 Indians and several white people. Slowly and thoughtfully the Indians turned to their homes to think about the Great Spirit who sent His only begotten Son into the world for our salvation.

Is the Drought Over?

It is May and seeding in Western Canada is done. There has been more moisture this winter and spring all over the west than for many years. The grain is germinating. The fields are green. Once again there is hope. But it is the June rains that count most. These have failed so often and in so many places that the question is "Will they come this year?" If they do the question as to whether soil erosion has permanently ruined the land for crop bearing will be answered. Much depends on this year. But whatever the weather our missionary task still lies before us. And so we have reorganized our forces and are preparing to move forward.

Eastern friends, both in Ontario and Quebec and the Maritime Provinces! You have been loyal, patient, and generous. Our work was commenced by you and would have withered long since but for your prayerful support. The days of drought have been long and many, and the nights of depression dark, but at last there is evidence of showers both physical and spiritual, and hopefully we are planning to move forward in His name knowing that neither He nor you will fail us now.

And so hoping we have passed through the blackest period of the drought and depression and that the future holds brighter and better things for us, we have "Reorganized for Advance."



Easter Sunday Service on the Hobbema Indian Reserve, with Pastor Benke

